

## RUSSIA AND THE WEST IN IRAN

the British the Bolshevik Revolution meant, first, that there would be one less ally to fight Germany; secondly, that the new Communist doctrine would eventually affect British imperial interests in the East.

In the following pages an attempt is made to analyze Soviet and British policies toward Iran since 1918; to describe the ensuing Iranian reaction; and to present some new [actors in this drama, as exemplified by the rise and fall of German influence and the emergence of active American interest.

### PROLOGUE: THE MAKING OF THE COLONIAL REVOLUTION

The key Russian oil city Baku was the scene of a memorable event in the fall of 1920. Conquered by the Red Army earlier in the year, Baku became the host to the First Congress of the Peoples of the East. The Congress had been called by the newly created Communist International to rally the East around the State of the Victorious Proletariat. For a long time Lenin had taught that revolution in the East was a concomitant to revolution in Russia and a prerequisite to the success of Communism all over the world. Now, in 1920, after the ordeal of civil war, Moscow was finally in a position to convoke an imposing meeting of Orientals and to make it a signal for action in the East.

An able and eloquent team represented the capital of the world revolution. It comprised Gregory Zinoviev, President of the Comintern, who acted as Chairman of the Congress; Karl Radek, at that time shining in the sun of Lenin; and the dethroned Hungarian Communist Bela Kun. Comrade Ostrovsky of the Bolshevik Party was elected Secretary.

The East, from Morocco to Manchuria, sent 1,891 delegates, of whom 1,273 <sup>were</sup> Communists, and—an innovation in oriental politics—fifty-five were women. A sixteen-man Presidium was elected. It was composed of both Communists and non-Communists inasmuch as the East was encouraged to co-operate irrespective of its formal adherence to the party.

Defining the aim of the Congress as the "awakening of the millions of peasants" in the Orient, Chairman Zinoviev made it clear in his